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ABSTRACT

This handbook focuses on intellectual freedom as it relates to school library media centers and public libraries. The purpose of this handbook is to help public libraries and school districts develop and adopt necessary policies and procedures that will build a solid foundation for intellectual freedom as part of the community and school climate and provide sources of assistance when an expression of concern or a complaint occurs. Although it contains suggestions for classroom teachers faced with challenges, the handbook does not have a major focus on resources selected specifically for classroom instruction. It is divided into four sections: School District Policies and Procedures: Selection and Reconsideration; School District Policies and Procedures: Internet Access; Public Library Policies and Procedures: Selection and Reconsideration; and Public Library Policies and Procedures: Internet Access. Both of the Selection and Reconsideration sections contain information on the philosophical base, statutory base, resource selection policy, reconsideration policy, staff development, communication and public information, and reconsideration in practice. The Internet Access sections include information on Internet filters, Internet policy, staff development, and communication and public information. Appendices include a selected bibliography, Wisconsin statues and administrative rules, Intellectual Freedom Statement, challenges to materials in school libraries, and sources of assistance. (AEF)

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Dealing with Selection and Censorship

A HANDBOOK FOR WISCONSIN SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES

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A Handbook for Wisconsin Schools and Libraries

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Think Before You Act

When someone expresses concern or complains about a resource, do nothing until:

- You have gathered all information.
- You have reviewed the school district or public library policy on reconsideration of resources.
- You have discussed the situation with your principal or library director.
- You have asked the teacher or librarian to explain the function of the resource.
- You have contacted the Cooperative Children's Book Center staff and/or Department of Public Instruction consultants.
- You have contacted public or school library counterparts or colleagues.

Do not:

- Prejudge the resource.
- Confiscate the resource from the library or classroom.
- Confiscate a resource from a student or patron.

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Foreword

The importance of open and free access to the widest possible resources, conveying the full range of human ideas and experience, cannot be over emphasized. This is particularly true for school and public libraries today.

The founders of our republic recognized that the free flow of ideas coupled with education was necessary for America's success. Thomas Jefferson stated: "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate posers of the society but with the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take power from them, but to inform their discretion through instruction."

With the passage of the Bill of Rights, especially the First Amendment, our founders placed legal guarantees of the free flow of information so that no future generation would be denied that for which they had fought. These guarantees have stood through all the technological changes of 200 years. They stand today to protect us in the Information Age; they must continue to stand as we enter the 21st century.

As our schools are wired for Internet access, we know our students will have access to a greater variety of ideas than ever before. The task of our schools today is not to limit that access, but to help our students learn how to use this resource wisely. There is no substitute for the ability to be an ethical, discriminating user of all ideas—print, nonprint, and online. Neil Postman stated it well when he said, "There can be no liberty for a community which lacks the critical skills to tell the difference between lies and truth."

Similarly, as our public libraries add Internet access to their resource collections they must continue to be places where all citizens, rich or poor, can tap into the full range of human experiences and ideas. When students leave the school house or the university, they must be able to continue to explore ideas, personal interests, and work–related knowledge at their public library.

As our society enters the 21st century, we are faced with a technology that rivals the printing press with its ability to quickly spread ideas. Ideas are powerful - that is why so many have attempted and will continue to attempt to limit and control them. As threatening as some ideas seem to our way of life, the greater threat is the effort of some to limit access to ideas for others.

Our great challenge is to equip all our citizens—from our youngest to our oldest—to make wise use of these new resources. Perhaps an even greater challenge is to resist the temptation to set ourselves up or allow anyone else to set themselves up as gatekeepers. It will be difficult to keep our eyes on the steadying vision of our nation's founders as we learn how to navigate in the Information Age.

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Introduction

Libraries and schools play a significant role in maintaining and nurturing free access to ideas and information in American society. In Chapter 43 of state statutes Wisconsin has written into law its recognition of that role.

The legislature recognizes:

- the importance of free access to knowledge, information, and diversity of ideas by all residents of this state;
- the critical role played by school, public, academic, and special libraries in providing that access;
- the major educational, cultural, and economic asset that is represented in the collective knowledge and information resources of the state's libraries; and
- the importance of public libraries to the democratic process.

In addition to its recognition of the role of all libraries, the State of Wisconsin further recognizes that the education of young people in the public schools of a democratic society requires access to a wide range of resources, both print and nonprint. In Wisconsin this need is written into state law which requires that instructional resources represent the "cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society" (Section 121.02(1)(h), Wis. Stats.).

Today, schools and libraries not only house collections of resources such as books, magazines, and audiovisual items but also provide access to electronic resources through the Internet and other online sources. Therefore, this handbook uses the term "resources" rather than "materials" as selection, reconsideration, and censorship are discussed.

The professional responsibility of selecting and providing access to public library, school library media center, and PK-12 curriculum resources to fulfill the roles recognized by statute is not an easy one. Even the most carefully and thoughtfully chosen resource can be subject to complaint. The responsibility is especially complex when access to the Internet is provided. This handbook is intended to provide information and resources which will help librarians and educators establish policies and procedures to guide them as they develop collections, provide Internet access, and handle challenges to resources.

This handbook focuses on intellectual freedom as it relates to school library media centers and public libraries. It does not include guidance for academic or special libraries. Although it contains suggestions for classroom teachers faced with challenges, *it does not have a major focus on resources selected specifically for classroom instruction.*

The purpose of this handbook is to help public libraries and school districts develop and adopt necessary policies and procedures that will build a solid foundation for intellectual freedom as part of the community and school climate and provide sources of assistance when an expression of concern or a complaint occurs.

Because there are significant differences in roles and applicable laws between public schools and public libraries, each type of institution has its own sections within this handbook. The handbook is intentionally brief to encourage attention to the most important principles and steps for schools and libraries. For those who need more detailed information, additional resources are cited.

Definitions

In order to make communication about intellectual freedom more consistent, the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association (ALA) adopted an Intellectual Freedom Glossary. This glossary is printed below. Throughout this handbook these definitions are used.

Intellectual Freedom Glossary

American Library Association

Adopted by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association, 1987.

Expression of Concern: An inquiry that has judgmental overtones.

Oral Complaint: An oral challenge to the presence and/or appropriateness of the material in question.

Written Complaint: A formal, written complaint filed with the institution—library, school, etc.—challenging the presence and/or appropriateness of specific material.

Public Attack: A publicly disseminated statement challenging the value of the material, presented to the media and/or others outside the institutional organization in order to gain support for further action.

Censorship: A change in the access status of material made by a governing authority or its representatives. Such changes include exclusion, restriction, removal, or age/grade level changes when the intent is to restrict access.

In addition to the Intellectual Freedom Glossary, this handbook uses two additional definitions. To clarify communication about its "School Media Center Resources Selection Policy," the Rosholt (WI) School Board adopted definitions for "selection" and "resources." The definitions that they developed are printed below and are used throughout this document.

School Media Center Resources Selection Policy - Excerpt

Rosholt (WI) School District

Selection: The decision which must be made to add resources to support curriculum and to meet recreational needs.

Media Center Resources: Print and nonprint materials purchased by or housed in the school media centers or received over telecommunications networks.

Adopted by the Rosholt School Board, January 9, 1996.

School District Policies and Procedures: Selection and Reconsideration 1

Philosophical Base

Good policies and procedures are based upon philosophical positions that can be clearly articulated. Policies and procedures which deal with resource selection and reconsideration are grounded in the United States Bill of Rights, the belief that democracy requires a free exchange of ideas and the belief that public education should provide an atmosphere rich in resources in which open investigation, discussion, and exploration of ideas can occur.

Change in teaching methodology creates an even greater need for broad library media center resources than in the past. Dianne McAfee Hopkins articulated this well. "The notion of textbooks as the only major resource used in teaching has been replaced in many learning environments with a resource-based teaching approach. In resource-based teaching a recognition of individual student learning styles, as well as student variation in background, ability, and interests, results in a multifaceted, multiple-resource approach to learning. The school library media specialist promotes access to a wide variety of resources. . . ." (*Intellectual Freedom Manual*, p. 269)

The advent of ubiquitous, unmediated information, particularly the Internet, means that it is essential that students learn to evaluate and discriminate among such information. The essential nature of information literacy skills becomes clear when one examines new academic standards such as *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Information and Technology Literacy*. Intellectual freedom principles must underlie school policies and procedures to foster a school environment in which free access prevails and students can learn skills necessary to successful participation in a democratic society.

Many national organizations have developed statements that articulate a philosophical base for intellectual freedom. (Selected statements are included in Appendix C of this handbook.) New national standards for school library media programs, outlined in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, emphasize the foundational nature of intellectual freedom for library media programs. *Information Power* states: "The goals of today's library media program point to the development of a community of learners that is centered on the student and sustained by a creative, energetic library media program." (p. 6) Goal seven in particular addresses creating an environment of free access and investigation:

> To provide resources and activities for learning that represent a diversity of experiences, opinions, and social and cultural perspectives and to support the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are prerequisite to effective and responsible citizenship in a democracy. (p. 7)

This goal is elaborated as one of the principles of information access and delivery. "The library media program is founded on a commitment to the right of intellectual freedom. Intellectual freedom is 'prerequisite to effective and responsible citizenship in a democracy.'...Freedom of access to information and ideas is essential for students and others to become critical thinkers, competent problem solvers, and life-long learners who contribute productively and ethically to society." (p. 91)

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has included similar statements in various publications. Two such statements, particularly appropriate to intellectual freedom, are provided below. They first appeared in the DPI's guides to curriculum planning in English/language arts and social studies.

Educational Freedom and the Public Schools

Adapted from *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in English/ Language Arts*

In a democratic society, the people must be free to seek information, to cooperate and work with others, to debate issues, to reach independent judgments, and to express their values and ideas in clear and rational ways. While the Bill of Rights guarantees the freedoms necessary to such active involvement by citizens, no law can directly foster the competencies of free thought and action. Only education can fill that need.

One of the major responsibilities of the public schools in a democracy, therefore, is to provide opportunities for students to practice and develop competence in language arts skills as they relate to democratic participation. This competence includes numerous abilities:

- The ability to gather information—written, visual, and oral.
- The abilities to express and understand diverse viewpoints.
- The ability to reach fair and reasonable judgments.
- The ability to express cultural, personal, and aesthetic values and ideas.

In order for students to develop these abilities, many people play a role.

Parents must

- take an active interest in the learning of their children.
- balance their concerns for their own children's education with the right of other parents' children to receive a wide range of appropriate learning experiences.

Teachers must

- provide appropriate and balanced information and ideas.
- provide guidance to students as they seek resources for their learning.
- teach the skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application.
- provide opportunities for thought, discussion, and expression.
- foster independent thinking.

Teachers, librarians, and school officials must

- be free to select materials appropriate to the levels of their students and to the curriculum of the schools.

- encourage students to identify appropriate and varied sources of knowledge.

Students must

- be free to inquire and to express their judgments.
- be free to express themselves intellectually, aesthetically, and personally.
- learn to respect views that differ from their own.
- be aware of the responsibilities as well as the rights of citizenship.

Public classrooms are forums for ideas and inquiry and for artistic and intellectual expression. As such, they must be places free of undue pressures for a single-minded orthodoxy.

Equity and Education

Adapted from *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Social Studies*

The state and the nation recognize the differences in the experiences of women and of men; of all races, colors, and ethnic groups; and of people of varied physical and mental abilities. These factors often result in the sorting, grouping, and tracking of minority, female, and disabled students in stereotyped patterns that prevent them from exploring all options and opportunities according to their individual talents and interests. The cost of bias to academic achievement, psychological and physical development, careers, and family relationships is significant. Each student should have the opportunity to observe his or her own place in the curriculum, to grow and develop, and to attain identity.

To that end, the Department of Public Instruction recommends the inclusion of all groups in the curriculum and in teaching and library media materials. We urge Wisconsin school districts to actively value all persons by including the contributions, images, and experiences of all groups in curricular objectives, classroom activities, and library media and instructional materials. The following list describes behaviors or habits that can endanger equity.

Invisibility: under-representation of certain groups, which leads to the implication that these groups are of less value, importance, and significance.

Stereotyping: assigning only traditional and rigid roles or attributes to a group, thus limiting the abilities and potential of that group; denying students a knowledge of the diversity, complexity, and variations of any group of individuals.

Imbalance/selectivity: presenting only one interpretation of an issue, situation, or group; distorting reality and ignoring complex and differing viewpoints through selective presentation of materials.

Unreality: presenting an unrealistic portrayal of our history and our contemporary life experience.

Fragmentation/isolation: separating issues related to minorities and women from the main body of the text.

Linguistic bias: excluding the role and importance of females by constant use of the generic "he" and sex-biased words.

Statutory Base

Section 118.13 of the Wisconsin Statutes prohibits pupil discrimination and requires all Wisconsin school districts to have school board-approved selection policies. Although the statutory language uses the word "materials," this handbook, as noted in the introduction, uses the broader term "resources." Using the more inclusive term reflects the increasing use of electronic resources and information found via the Internet.

Chapter PI 9.03(1)(e), Wis. Admin. Code, which implements this statute, specifies that school boards must have policies that prohibit discrimination against pupils, including an instructional and library media materials selection policy consistent with sec. 121.02(1)(h), Stats., and PI 8.01(2)(h), Wis. Admin. Code.

This statute and its administrative code are intended to ensure equal treatment for all students and specify that every selection policy must contain language prohibiting discrimination. The following statement appears in a sample policy distributed by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and would meet this requirement.

> The School District shall not discriminate in the selection and evaluation of instructional and library resources on the basis of *sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.*

The italicized language is that used in Wisconsin statutes; all of these designations must be included.

In addition, Section 121.02 (1)(h), Wis. Stats. (often referred to as Standard h) requires that "the school board shall...provide adequate instructional materials, texts, and library services which reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society." (More complete excerpts from the statutes and administrative rules are provided in Appendix B of this document.)

Taken together, these two statutes and their accompanying administrative rules direct school districts to develop selection policies to provide the criteria for selection of instructional resources, texts, and library resources. Establishing these policies is the first step in implementing intellectual freedom principles. It is noteworthy that both statutes stipulate that policy statements must include all instructional resources, not just library resources. The Department of Public Instruction suggests that school districts group selection policies for textbooks, library resources (both print and nonprint), and supplementary instructional resources in one section of its policy manual. By so doing, the district can provide overarching principles with criteria specific to each type of resource in separate policies. For example, criteria for textbooks will have direct links to the curriculum content, whereas criteria for library media center materials will support the curriculum but will also provide for students' recreational and leisure interests.

Resource Selection Policy

The district library media resource selection policy should be developed thoughtfully to reflect the district needs. When completed, the school board must formally adopt the document.

Each school district should select a committee representative of teachers, library media specialists, administrators, parents and/or other community members, and students to develop the selection policy. The committee might also seek school board representation because an understanding of the policy language, its implications, and the discussions that produced it may be helpful when the policy is presented to the board for adoption.

Although each school district must tailor its policy to its particular needs, the following table of contents from *Censorship and Selection: Issues and Answers for Schools* is a good model (see Appendix A).

Part 1: Selection of Materials
- I. Statement of Policy
- II. Selection Objectives
- III. Responsibility for Selection
  - A. Delegation of Responsibility to Professional Staff
  - B. Responsibility for Library/Media Center Selection
  - C. Responsibility for Textbook Selection
  - D. Responsibility for Selection of Supplementary Classroom Materials
- IV. Selection Criteria
  - A. General Criteria
  - B. Specific Criteria: Library Materials
  - C. Specific Criteria: Classroom Materials
- V. Policy on Controversial Materials
  - A. General Statement
  - B. Library Bill of Rights

Part 2: Selection Procedures
- I. Procedures for Policy Implementation
  - A. Selection Aids
  - B. Recommendation Procedures
  - C. Gifts
  - D. Special Concerns
- II. Evaluation and Review of Existing Materials
- III. Procedures for Dealing With Challenges
  - A. Request for Informal Review
  - B. Request for Formal Review
  - C. The Reconsideration Committee
  - D. Resolution and Appeal

See Chapter 4 ("Establishing Selection Policies") for a list of excellent background reading for any committee beginning to write such a policy. Additional information for policy committees can be found in Appendix A ("Selected Bibliography"). The Department of Public Instruction's Instructional Media and Technology Team also has available a packet of sample selection policies from Wisconsin school districts that can be borrowed.

In addition to establishing a policy, districts should establish regular intervals for policy review so that policies meet current needs. A review every three to five years is a good procedure.

Reconsideration Policy

Every selection policy should include a section relating to procedures to follow in reconsidering resources about which there is a complaint. The reconsideration policy should clearly state the specific steps to be taken when an expression of concern, an oral complaint, or a written complaint occurs. It should also state that the procedures are to be used in all cases including when the complaint originates with a staff member.

The policy that is in place at the time of a complaint is the one that is used to handle the complaint. During the reconsideration process, new procedures cannot be adopted and applied to that complaint; new or changed procedures will apply only to future complaints.

One of the most important steps in the reconsideration of resources is the activation or appointment of a reconsideration committee. The policy should specify how and by whom such a committee is appointed, who or what constituencies are to be represented on the committee, who chairs the committee, and what its responsibilities are.

Although the policy can stipulate that a reconsideration committee be appointed at the time of a written complaint, it is better to have a standing committee that is activated at the time of a complaint. The standing committee should be convened at the beginning of each school year for an organizational meeting. At that time they should review the purpose of the committee, the selection and reconsideration policies and procedures, and the role of the committee.

It should be made clear in the policy that when the committee handles a complaint it is to listen to all those who wish to speak to the issue; carry out its own deliberations; and make formal recommendations in an orderly, open meeting.

Experience dictates that a district should

- be specific about what steps are to be taken and the timeline whenever an expression of concern or an oral or written complaint occurs.
- be specific about the role of the reconsideration committee, the role of administrators, and the role of the school board during the process.
- provide a form for those who wish to file a written complaint; state that the form must be completed before the process can proceed.
- specify that while a resource is under reconsideration it will remain available to students and staff as it always has been.
- make it clear that a resource is not removed unilaterally by any one person or small group; a resource is only removed as a result of the procedure specified in board-adopted policy.
- make it clear that an item is reconsidered for the specific building collection in question, not for every building in the district.
- be specific about what the procedure is if a complainant wishes to appeal a decision.

- include a specific period of time during which an item will not be reconsidered again (for example, *upon completion of a reconsideration process, the same item will not be reconsidered for five years*).

The practice of some individuals or groups of challenging entire subjects, themes, or sections of resources is of growing concern. To avoid ongoing reconsiderations—item by item—of entire subjects, districts may decide to include a procedure to resolve such an essentially redundant process. For example, a district may reserve the right to refuse further reconsideration requests when it has dealt with five challenges to items on the same topic within five years.

Staff Development

It is very important that, following adoption of the selection policy, all library media specialists, teachers, administrators, and support staff receive staff development related to resource selection and reconsideration. Each school year, all new administrators, teachers, and other staff should participate in such training, and invitations also should be sent to school board members. Part of the training should focus on reconsideration policies and procedures, with some emphasis being given to the following principles and practices:

- All library media specialists in the district should have a copy of the board-adopted policy on file in the library office. They should reread the policy annually and regularly make suggestions for necessary revisions.
- All community members have a right to question resources; therefore, all expressions of concern or complaints should be handled in a neutral, consistent, respectful, democratic manner consistent with the board-adopted policy.
- Parents have the right to determine reading/viewing resources for their own children but not for the children of others.
- School district administrators, faculty, and other staff also have a right to question resources in the same way that other community members do, and they should expect that the board-adopted reconsideration policy will apply to their complaints as well.
- The board-adopted policy should *always* be followed no matter who is complaining or who is receiving the complaint.
- When an appointed committee is reconsidering an item, it should be clear to committee members that their task is to determine if the item in question meets the established selection criteria; their decision should not be based on their personal beliefs or preferences.

(Many of the resources listed in Appendix A of this document include examples of reconsideration policies and/or reconsideration request forms.)

Frequency of inservice is important. Without becoming too repetitious, presentations and workshops regarding intellectual freedom and selection and reconsideration policies and procedures should be held every two or three years. Each time new members are added to the school board, training in intellectual freedom principles and education for a democratic society should be included in their orientation.

Communication and Public Information

One of the keys to keeping complaints to a minimum is to maintain active communication within the school and an ongoing public information program through the parents' network and in the community at large. This communication effort must not be taken lightly. The better informed all parties are regarding intellectual freedom principles, district and building policies, and selection procedures, the less likely it is that schools will find it necessary to mount a defense of resources.

The following suggestions will help ensure good communication:

- Library media specialists, teachers, and administrators regularly should promote the library media program, not only within the school, but also to parents and the broader community. In order to accomplish this task successfully, the district should develop a library media program of which the school and community can be proud.
- The school principal is the instructional leader of the building and should be involved in determining appropriate selection and reconsideration policies. Once policies are adopted by the school board, the principal must remain familiar with them and apply them consistently.
- Library media specialists should meet and become acquainted with the local newspaper's editor or education reporter. This can be accomplished by a personal visit or phone call, followed by appropriate news releases or other contacts. They should also make contact with representatives of local radio and television stations. Media persons should be invited to special events at the school.
- The district should share the resource selection process with parents and other interested parties. In addition to articles in newspapers and general school communications, consider a program for parents, students, and others to define the process and answer questions.
- Teachers and students should be involved in the selection process.
- The library media specialist should take responsibility for reviewing the approved selection and reconsideration processes periodically with administrators, teachers, and school board members.

Reconsideration in Practice

Regardless of how carefully districts select resources or how much good communication occurs, some members of the community or school district employees may express concern or register a complaint about selected resources. During this process it is important to remember that, while parents have the right to judge whether an item is acceptable for their own children, they do not have the right to restrict other children's access to library or instructional resources. If an expression of concern or an oral or written complaint is made to a school board member, administrator, or teacher, that person should not attempt to assume responsibility for reconsideration but should direct the individual to the library media specialist.

It is important that the district follow the approved steps written into the reconsideration policy. The steps are purposely sequential; unnecessary confusion or delay can result when the steps are not followed.

When an expression of concern or a complaint occurs,

- the district should treat the person expressing concern with respect. Everyone has the right to request that a resource be reviewed. Inquiries should not be taken personally; reactions should be pleasant, informative, and initiate the first steps of the reconsideration process.
- the library media specialist should discuss the individual's concerns on an informal basis and explain the selection process and rationale for resources. If this does not resolve the issue, the specialist should explain the formal complaint process and give the individual a written complaint form.
- the principal should be informed immediately of the initial question and should be kept apprised of any further developments as they occur. This is an opportunity to reacquaint the principal with the written and approved policy of the district and building.
- all school personnel should behave in an objective, consistent manner and, without exception, follow the predetermined reconsideration policy.
- the resource being questioned should remain in normal use until a final decision has been made based on the approved reconsideration policy.
- the district should contact organizations such as The Cooperative Children's Book Center and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (whose services are described in Appendix E) immediately so that reviews and information pertinent to the questioned resource can compiled. *Do not wait until a written complaint has been received.*
- the district should provide accurate information at every stage of the process through proper school channels (such as the district administrator or public relations professional) in response to queries from the media.
- the district should address internal complaints (from teachers, students, administrators, media specialists, and others) in accordance with the board-adopted policy for selection and reconsideration of resources in the same manner as complaints originating outside the school.
- districts should remember that meetings and deliberations of the reconsideration committee are subject to Wisconsin's open meetings law.

Another consideration that may arise is whether to retain an item but change its status. A change in status can mean moving the item to

- a different section (for example, from picture books to general fiction shelving);
- restricted shelving so that a student must ask for the item; or
- another building serving different grade levels.

Changing the status of an item should be done with great care because *changing the status of an item is censorship when the intent is to restrict access* (refer to the Intellectual Freedom Glossary on page 2). If a committee decides to retain an item but considers changing its status, it should carefully review the reason for considering this option. *The motivation should never be to bar access.*

Complaints About Classroom Resources: Procedures for Teachers

Complaints about classroom resources should be covered by the procedures outlined above. However, teachers may find the following additional procedures helpful in dealing with complaints about resources selected for individual classes.

All teachers make daily decisions about curricular goals and objectives, resources, methods of instruction, and evaluation, choosing from increasingly broad and varied alternatives in order to serve students who are themselves increasingly diverse, both linguistically and culturally. Teachers make these decisions in a context that considers the students' needs, district goals, ethical standards, and current developments in education.

Because our understanding of children and how they learn, of how to teach effectively, and of the needs of our society are in constant flux, we will always need to articulate professional decisions as well as to discuss and debate contemporary educational practice. However, if the discussion becomes an attempt to censor school practice, the following guidelines can help:

The single most important point to be remembered when an expression of concern, an oral complaint, or a written complaint occurs is to follow the board-adopted policy and procedure. This is true regardless of the position of the person originating the complaint. School administrators, teachers, librarians, students, parents, board members, and community members are equally bound by board-adopted policy.

- When a parent, other community member, or school district person asks for a justification for some assignment or resource, assume that the person simply wants to know what is occurring. Do not assume a common frame of reference. Be very thorough in your oral or written response.
- When you read about a public concern with your curriculum or receive a formal letter from a representative of a group, consult with your principal, who should in turn work within the appropriate school guidelines. You should also inform your educational association or union representative.
- When a school board member or an administrator expresses concern about your program or the resource you use in a way that appears to question your committee's or your own professional judgment, inform your educational association or union representative.
- When an oral or written complaint occurs, contact your local or state professional association representative, the appropriate consultant at your nearby university, and the subject-area consultant at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This action benefits both you and the profession. These people can provide information or refer you to other appropriate groups that might assist. Your contact also alerts them to potential problems for your colleagues in other districts or allows them to better understand a pattern that may be developing across the state. At the same time your union or association representative should have contacted a mid-level service

unit of the association or union or the state organization directly for assistance.

- At the same time, you and your colleagues should begin to gather as much information as possible related to the resource or technique under question, anticipating that at the very least you will need to justify this resource to an administrator and, more likely, to the reconsideration committee. Such material should contain copies of the particular learning goals and objectives to which the resource or activity is related; a description of the resource or activity that may be contained in the school's written curriculum; professional references that recommend and/or review the resource or activity positively; and, if possible, testimonials from experts who know the curriculum. Be particularly careful to include references to the written school curriculum that has been approved by the school board and district administrators, because the questioned resources or practices should be related to the goals and objectives in the written curriculum. If you locate negative reviews of the resource, you should also include them with your own counter statements as to why the resource is appropriate for use in your classes.
- Stay informed about current issues related to censorship by reading the American Library Association's *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom*, attending to the work of your national subject area organization, the work of your state professional association's committee against censorship, and the work of the many national and state coalitions and organizations working to promote the freedom of students to read and to learn and of teachers to teach.

Things will not always proceed in appropriate order. If you get a complaint, tell your administrator immediately. Administrators who receive a complaint should talk to the librarian or teacher first.

Conclusion

Regardless of the origin of a complaint, it is especially important that the chairperson prepare the committee appointed to deal with complaints by providing adequate background information, including the district selection policy and reviews of the challenged item, as well as ample opportunity to read/view/listen to the entire item under reconsideration.

A school district that follows a positive program articulating a philosophy of intellectual freedom, translating that philosophy into policies and procedures, and practicing good public relations and staff development will be well prepared to handle expressions of concern and complaints when they occur.

School District Policies and Procedures: Internet Access 2

Access to the Internet presents tremendous opportunities and challenges for schools. Wisconsin recognizes that access to modern technology, including the Internet, is important for schools. As evidence of this recognition, the state created the Technology for Educational Achievement in Wisconsin (TEACH WISCONSIN) Board and its funding programs which strive to provide equitable access to technology for all schools and public libraries across the state.

The Internet provides opportunities for students to participate in research, communicate across cultures, and access primary resources previously reserved for a small academic community. At the same time schools recognize that the Internet is an unmediated resource that presents new challenges. Access to the Internet provides access to many resources which have not gone through any editorial or selection process. While searching the Internet, the user plays a significant role in the selection of educational resources or information.

Parents are critical to a successful integration of Internet use into the school. Good communication with parents is essential, and many schools require parental permission before students use the Internet. The process of securing parental permission provides an opportunity to tell parents how the Internet will enhance their child's education.

Internet Filters

Every district and school must decide whether it will provide access to the Internet without a filtering mechanism or whether it will attempt to filter out undesirable resources. This is an important decision related to the intellectual freedom philosophy of the district. No clear legal guidelines exist yet because this is a developing field and issues surrounding it are working their way through the courts.

The American Library Association has taken a clear position that intellectual freedom dictates that Internet access be unfiltered. The full text of its statement ("Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill Of Rights") is included in Appendix C. The following excerpt from this statement summarizes its position:

> Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing resources for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present special problems. Some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of

electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to information available via electronic resources because of its allegedly controversial content or because of the librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Information retrieved or utilized electronically should be considered constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court with appropriate jurisdiction.

Compelling reasons exist for a school to offer unfiltered access to the Internet.

- Students must learn how to discriminate between accurate, reliable sources and unreliable sources. This can be taught most effectively in an unfiltered environment.
- Filters, although becoming more sophisticated, are difficult to manage so that all desirable resources are admitted and all undesirable resources are excluded. In fact, every system will fail to produce desired results at some point.
- Schools may find themselves more vulnerable to legal action if they use filters and give parents a false sense of security, assuming that resources the parents consider inappropriate will not be accessible to their children.

In addition, a school can take actions to help ensure appropriate educational use of the Internet. A few suggestions follow:

- Develop and implement an Internet Use Policy which clearly states how and why the Internet is to be used. This prepares students to be responsible users of the Internet at work and in their personal lives.
- Clarify for parents what use the school will permit and what the consequences of violation will be.
- Incorporate Internet access into the total library media program, and teach students how to evaluate and select high quality resources from the Internet.
- Provide links or bookmarks to excellent web sites to guide students to good academic use of the Internet.
- Build a relationship with your local public library and explore mutual concerns and possible joint programming for families.

Internet Policy

When a school district develops its Internet polices and procedures, the development process is critical. Planned efforts should be made to involve the school board, parents, and other community members so that all parties understand the purpose of access to the Internet and the rationale for policies and procedures. A key partnership can be with the public library; Internet policy development and implementation offers an excellent opportunity for the school to work with the public library and reach out to the community.

The Internet policy should be linked to the school district mission and goals. It should clearly state how access to the Internet will help achieve its goals. The Internet policy should also be consistent with the district

policy governing selection of resources and should make reference to that policy. Such a linkage places the Internet clearly within the concept of educational resources.

If the school district has a school improvement plan or an integrated curriculum plan, it should clearly state how Internet access fits within those plans. Internet use should be linked to the Wisconsin model academic standards. Many of the standards lend themselves to this, particularly *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Information and Technology Literacy*.

It is likely that a school district will develop a comprehensive policy to govern all aspects of the service with several subsections. Several web sites are helpful sources for outlines, issues discussion, and templates. Because web sites change often, Appendix E lists key sites that provide links to many other sites. An important part of the comprehensive policy is an Acceptable Use Policy, which describes what will be expected of students as well as staff and what the consequences of violation will be. The following outline gives an idea of how a comprehensive district policy could be organized.

Possible School District Internet Policy Outline

I. School District Mission Statement and Goals
II. Philosophy of Internet Service and Connection to District Goals
III. Reference to Resources Selection Policy and Library Media Program
IV. Description of Services Provided
V. School District Responsibilities
VI. Parental Responsibilities
VII. User Responsibilities (Student and Staff)
    A. Acceptable Uses
    B. Consequences of Misuse
    C. Copyright
VIII. District Web Site (if the district or school has or will have its own site)

As with the selection policy, the school board must officially adopt the Internet policy. Just as it is important to review the resources selection policy on a regular basis, it is necessary to review the Internet policy regularly. An annual review is a good idea because Internet technology and legal interpretations are changing quickly.

Staff Development

It is especially critical that teachers and other staff who will be working with students receive thorough training and practice on all aspects of the Internet prior to its use in the school. Often Internet training focuses on the mechanical "how to's" of accessing and finding information on the Internet. It is also critical that teachers understand how to use Internet resources effectively within the curriculum. Training must include

- the role of Internet access within the library media program,
- instructional purposes and curricular links,
- policies and procedures for student and staff access,

- consequences of misuse of the Internet by either students or staff,
- basics of how to use the service, and
- techniques for teaching students to use the Internet.

Communication and Public Information

Good communication with parents and the general public will do much to prevent misunderstanding and problems once Internet access has been implemented. The launch of Internet access also provides a good opportunity for positive relationships with the community. The following ideas might be appropriate for your district or school. They can be developed to create a positive, enthusiastic atmosphere for Internet services.

- Offer community education classes on Internet resources.
- Hold an open house during which educational Internet sites are demonstrated.
- Provide clear, well-written handouts and brochures that outline Internet purposes and policies.
- Develop programs for community volunteers to assist with Internet use.
- Develop learning opportunities that involve community members, such as e-mail exchanges with seniors.

These are but a few examples of ways to share the Internet with the wider community. As noted previously, this is an excellent opportunity to work together with your local public library. A number of these activities would lend themselves to joint or coordinated programming.

Public Library Policies and Procedures: Selection and Reconsideration 3

Philosophical Base

Gordon M. Conable ably describes the role of public libraries within our democratic society: "It is the genius of the American system that we base our liberty on the broadest protection of each individual's rights to free expression and on the corollary right to access the expression of others. It is the genius of the American public library to be an institution dedicated to promoting the exercise of these rights" (*Intellectual Freedom Manual*, p. 260).

Public libraries generally adopt the Library Bill of Rights as their philosophical base (see Appendix C). As noted in the introduction, Wisconsin recognizes the significant role libraries play in maintaining and nurturing free access to ideas and information. The bedrock of public library philosophy is that it provides the one place in our society where all people–regardless of age, status, or economic condition–have access to the full arena of human ideas.

Statutory Base

Wisconsin public libraries are governed by the local public library board. Wisconsin Statute 43.58(4) requires Wisconsin library boards to "supervise the administration of the public library... ." It provides local library boards with substantial discretion to develop library use policies that best meet local needs.

Wisconsin statutes support the ideals of intellectual freedom in public libraries. Legislative findings and declaration of policy appear in Wis. Stat. 43.001(1).

1. The legislature recognizes:
   (a) The importance of free access to knowledge, information and diversity of ideas by all residents of this state;
   (b) The critical role played by public, school, special and academic libraries in providing that access;
   (c) The major educational, cultural and economic asset that is represented in the collective knowledge and information resources of the state's libraries;
   (d) The importance of public libraries to the democratic process;...

The legislature specifically recognizes the role of public libraries in providing access to inclusive collections in statutes dealing with "obscene material or performance" (Wis. Stat. 944.21 (8)).

Wisconsin law addresses concerns that public libraries and schools might be criminally liable if a minor views obscene or sexually explicit resources at an Internet terminal or in other library resources and protects Wisconsin schools and libraries from prosecution under the "obscene material" or "harmful to minors" statutes.

(a) The legislature finds that the libraries and educational institutions under par. (b) carry out the essential purpose of making available to all citizens a current, balanced collection of books, reference materials, periodicals, sound recordings and audiovisual materials that reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society. The legislature further finds that it is in the interest of the state to protect the financial resources of libraries and educational institutions from being expended in litigation and to permit these resources to be used to the greatest extent possible for fulfilling the essential purpose of libraries and educational institutions.

(b) No person who is an employe, a member of the board of directors or a trustee of any of the following is liable to prosecution for violation of this section for acts or omissions while in his or her capacity as an employe, a member of the board of directors or a trustee:

1. A public elementary or secondary school.
2. A private school, as defined in s. 115.001 (3r).
3. Any school offering vocational, technical or adult education that:
   (a) Is a technical college, is a school approved by the educational approval board under s. 39.51 or is a school described in s. 39.51 (9) (f), (g) or (h); and
   (b) Is exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) (3) of the internal revenue code.
4. Any institution of higher education that is accredited, as described in s. 39.30 (1) (d), and is exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) (3) of the internal revenue code.
5. A library that receives funding from any unit of government.

The major legal parameter for public libraries in establishing policies and procedures is the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Public libraries, as government agencies, are prohibited by the Constitution from taking actions which impermissibly limit freedom of speech. The courts have held that in a public forum, such as a public library, government may not restrict the content of communication unless the restriction is necessary to achieve a compelling government interest and there is no less restrictive means to achieve that interest.

Resource Selection Policy

Authority for library policies belongs to the public library board (Wis. Stat. 43.58). A sound selection policy, developed through a collaborative process and formally adopted by the library board ensures (1) the continuous growth of a collection and (2) resource access appropriate to the library's defined mission and goals.

Each public library should select a committee representative of librarians (both administrative and public service, if appropriate) and community members to develop the selection policy. The

committee might also seek library board representation because an understanding of the policy language, its implications, and the discussions that produced it may be helpful when the policy is presented to the board for adoption.

Although each library must tailor its policy to its particular mission and community needs, the Division for Libraries and Community Learning has provided general guidelines to assist local library trustees and administrators in developing collection development policies. The *Wisconsin Public Library Trustee Handbook* (p. 35) advises that such a policy should cover

- the purpose and scope of collection (adult and children's);
- the types of resources to be purchased;
- staff responsibility for selection;
- use of professional selection tools;
- the basis and method of withdrawing and disposing of resources;
- the acceptance of gift resources (usually with the understanding that the same selection standards will be applied to gift resources as to those purchased and that staff will have discretion in judging what gift resources will actually be added to the collection); and
- affirmations of intellectual freedom.

Certainly any role(s) a library has selected for itself as part of a planning process and any particular characteristics of the community should be reflected in the selection policy. This relationship should be clear to anyone who reads the policy.

In addition to establishing a policy, libraries should establish regular intervals for policy review so that policies meet current needs. A review every three to five years is a good procedure.

Sample collection development policies are available from the Public Library Development Team at the DPI's Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning.

Reconsideration Policy

Every selection policy should include a section relating to procedures to follow for handling citizen complaints about resources. The reconsideration policy should clearly state the specific steps to be taken when an expression of concern, an oral complaint, or a written complaint occurs. It should also state that the procedures are to be used in all cases including when the complaint originates with a staff member, library board member, or city official.

The policy that is in place at the time of a complaint is the one that is used to handle the complaint. During the reconsideration process, new procedures cannot be adopted and applied to that complaint; new or changed procedures will apply only to future complaints.

Experience dictates that a library should

- be specific about what steps are to be taken and the timeline to be followed whenever an expression of concern or an oral or written complaint occurs.

- provide a form for those who wish to file a written complaint; state that the form must be completed before the process can proceed.
- specify that while an item is under reconsideration it will remain available to patrons and staff as it always has been.
- make it clear that a resource is not removed unilaterally by any one person or small group.
- be specific about what the procedure is if a complainant wishes to appeal a decision.
- include a specific period of time during which an item will not be reconsidered again (for example, *upon completion of a reconsideration process, the same item will not be reconsidered for five years).*

The procedure might include

- a meeting with the complainant, library director, and/or staff person responsible for selection. The director and/or staff person should listen objectively, provide a copy of the selection policy, and invite the submission of a written statement of concern.
- the library director's review of the complaint and written response, including information on how the decision can be appealed.
- if the citizen wishes to pursue the matter further, a board review of the written complaint with references to selection tools such as reviews and recommendations.
- board preparation of a written response to the complainant.

The use of written communication often defuses a potentially irate exchange. However, the final step in the complaint process can be an open meeting between the complainant and the board. The board can then make a final decision on the matter.

The practice of some individuals or groups of challenging entire subjects, themes, or sections of resources is of growing concern. To avoid ongoing reconsiderations—item by item—of entire subjects, libraries may decide to include a procedure to resolve such an essentially redundant process. For example, a library may reserve the right to refuse further reconsideration requests when it has dealt with five challenges to items on the same topic within five years.

Firm support by trustees of the principles of intellectual freedom is essential, as is their willingness to support staff decisions made in line with the selection policies that the board has formally adopted. It is important that the board act as a whole in these matters; individual trustees should not try to act on their own.

Libraries interested in developing or updating their resource development policies should review *Wisconsin Public Library Standards* (DPI, 1994), which includes a chapter on collections that contains a checklist of voluntary collection standards for public libraries.

Staff Development

It is very important that, following adoption of the selection policy, all library staff receive training in the area of resource selection and reconsideration. Invitations to this training should also be sent to library board members. Part of the training should focus on reconsideration

policies and procedures, with some emphasis being given to the following principles and practices:

- All library directors should have a copy of the policy on file in the library office and at the public service desks. They should reread the policy annually and regularly make notations for necessary revisions.
- All community members have a right to question resources; therefore, all expressions of concern or complaints should be handled in a neutral, consistent, respectful manner.
- Parents have the right to determine reading/viewing resources for their own children but not for the children of others.
- Library staff and city officials also have a right to question resources, and they should expect that the reconsideration process will apply to their complaints as well.
- The established policy and procedure should *always* be followed no matter who is complaining or who is receiving the complaint.
- When an item is being reconsidered, it should be clear that the task is to determine if the item in question meets the established selection criteria; the decision should not be based on reviewers' personal beliefs or preferences.

Frequency of training is important. Without becoming too repetitious, presentations and workshops regarding intellectual freedom and selection and reconsideration policies and procedures should be held on a recurring basis. Each time new members are added to the library board, some type of intellectual freedom information should be included in their orientation.

Communication and Public Information

One of the keys to keeping complaints to a minimum is to maintain active communication within the library staff and an ongoing public information program in the community at large. This communication effort must not be taken lightly. The better informed all parties are regarding intellectual freedom principles, library policies and practices, and selection procedures, the less likely it is that libraries will find it necessary to mount a defense of resources.

Proactive programming which brings community members to the library for a variety of purposes, particularly public discourse, helps establish the role of the library as a public forum. Examples of such activities include book discussion groups; use of public meeting rooms by a variety of community groups; adult literacy programs; areas for community flyers, papers, and information; open forums, and so forth.

The library board should adopt policies in regard to these types of practices, such as use of meeting rooms, that reflect principles of intellectual freedom. Libraries should be aware that First Amendment protections extend to public use of a public library meeting room. (Note: Information on this topic is not addressed in this handbook.)

Reconsideration in Practice

Regardless of how carefully libraries select resources or how proactive communication is, some members of the community or library employees may express concern or register a complaint about selected resources. If an expression of concern or an oral or written complaint is made to a library board member, administrator, or city employee, that person should not attempt to discuss the item or assume responsibility for reconsideration but should direct the individual to the appropriate professional.

It is important that the library follow the approved steps written into the reconsideration policy. The steps are purposely sequential; unnecessary confusion or delay can result when the steps are not followed.

The single most important point to be remembered when an expression of concern, an oral complaint, or a written complaint occurs is to follow the library's policy and procedure. This is true regardless of the position of the person originating the complaint. Librarians, administrators, city officials, and library board members are equally bound by the policy.

When an expression of concern or a complaint occurs,

- the library should treat the person expressing concern with respect. The public has the right to request that a resource be reviewed. Inquiries should not be taken personally; reactions should not be defensive.
- the library director should be informed immediately of the initial question.
- the librarian should discuss the individual's concerns on an informal basis and explain the selection process and rationale for resources. If this does not resolve the issue, the librarian should explain the formal complaint process and give the individual a written complaint form.
- library personnel should behave in an objective, consistent manner and, without exception, follow the predetermined reconsideration policy.
- an item being questioned should remain in normal use until a final decision has been made based on the approved reconsideration policy.
- the library should contact organizations such as The Cooperative Children's Book Center and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (whose services are described in Appendix E) immediately so that reviews and information pertinent to the questioned resource can be compiled. *Do not wait until a written complaint has been received.*
- the library should provide accurate information through proper channels (such as the library director or public relations professional) in response to queries from the media.
- the library should address internal complaints in accordance with the library's written and approved policy for selection and reconsideration of resources in the same manner as complaints originating outside the library.

Another consideration that may arise is whether to retain an item but change its status. A change in status can mean moving the item to

- a different section (for example, from picture books to general fiction shelving);

- a different section of the building (for example, from the children's room to the adult section); or
- restricted shelving so that a patron must ask for the item.

Changing the status of an item should be done with great care because *changing the status of an item is censorship when the intent is to restrict access* (refer to the Intellectual Freedom Glossary on page 2). If a committee decides to retain an item but considers changing its status, it should carefully review the reason for considering this option. *The motivation should never be to bar access.*

Public Library Policies and Procedures: Internet Access 4

The Internet is transforming the way in which ideas and information are shared worldwide. The Internet provides an unmediated flow of information and ideas from the widest possible sources to anyone who has access to it. Public libraries play a critical role in ensuring that this source of information is not limited to those who have the financial means to access it. Public libraries also have trained staff to help library users find accurate information using a wide range of print and electronic resources.

Wisconsin recognizes that access to modern technology, including the Internet, is important for all citizens. As evidence of this recognition, the state created the Technology for Educational Achievement in Wisconsin (TEACH WISCONSIN) Board and its funding programs, which strive to provide equitable access to technology for all schools and public libraries across the state.

Providing access to the Internet is not the same type of decision as selecting a particular book, journal subscription, or audiovisual item. It is providing access to a decentralized, information vehicle over which there is no traditional editorial control. With this new type of information flow, libraries are faced with uncharted waters.

Internet Filters

The first question libraries often face once they decide to provide access to the Internet is whether to filter that access. Most public libraries do not use Internet filters; some use filters on terminals in the children's section. For the most part, however, they seem to agree with the position that once a library decides to provide access, it provides access to the entire Internet.

The American Library Association has taken a clear position that intellectual freedom dictates access to the Internet be unfiltered. (The full text of its statement, "Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill Of Rights" is included in Appendix C.) The following excerpt from this statement summarizes its position:

> Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing individual items for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present special problems. Some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

> Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to information available via electronic resources because of its allegedly controversial content or because of the librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Information retrieved or utilized electronically should be considered constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court with appropriate jurisdiction.

The Wisconsin Library Association Board also has adopted this position.

On the other hand, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) issued a report stating that one of several potential solutions to these difficult issues is to provide separate terminals for adults and children or to install multiple profiles on terminals; thus, children are not provided the same access as adults. Another filter-related "potential solution" listed by the NCLIS was to configure filters so they can be turned on or off.

Libraries should also be aware that certain filtering policies may be contrary to the First Amendment. Court cases regarding the use of filters in public libraries are working their way through the court system. Libraries need to stay informed as cases are decided and consult their own legal counsel as they develop policies.

Many libraries develop policies that inform parents of the possibility of resources inappropriate for children and ask them to grant permission for their children to use the Internet. Consistent with their position on parental concern about other library resources, the library makes it clear that it is the parents' responsibility to monitor the things their children see, hear, and read.

Internet Policy

Once a library has decided that it will provide access to the Internet, it must develop clear policies that guide implementation. Such policies should be based on the library's philosophy and goals.

NCLIS has developed a set of questions to consider in developing an Internet use policy.

- Can children use the Internet independently or do they need parental supervision or permission?
- Will the library adopt a code of conduct that must be signed by a parent and child before the child accesses the Internet?
- Will the library adopt a clear statement that Internet terminals may not be used for illegal activities?
- How does the library define illegal activities?
- Will users have to sign up to use Internet terminals?
- Will there be time limits on the use of Internet terminals?
- Will the results of users' research be visible to other users or will the library install privacy screens or other means to restrict public viewing?
- What does the library do when a user is discovered using an Internet terminal for illegal or improper use?
- How does the library handle user and staff complaints about others gaining access to illegal or objectionable sites?

- How will the library handle false accusations about illegal or improper use?
- Does the library's insurance coverage address matters arising from providing access to the Internet?
- How will the library handle access to functions such as chat and e-mail?
- How can the library instill practical "street smarts" on the part of librarians and users?
- How does the library train the governing board on the promise and perils of the Internet?
- How do the library and its governing board transmit concerns about Internet access to its funding authority?
- Will the library involve the local community through focus groups, public hearings, and other means in developing Internet use policy?
- How will the library seek legal review of its Internet policy, both from its own legal counsel as well as from other legal experts?

Libraries that address these questions in their Internet use policy will have a good foundation and set of guidelines for Internet access services.

Staff Development

Before access to the Internet is initiated for the public, library staff must have thorough training in its use. Not only must they feel comfortable with basic access, but they should be skilled enough to assist unskilled users. It is especially critical that staff who will be working with patrons receive thorough training and practice on all aspects of the Internet prior to its use by the public. Training must include:

- the basics of using the service
- policies and procedures for patron and staff access
- consequences of misuse by either patrons or staff
- techniques for teaching patrons how to use the service

Communication and Public Information

Initiating Internet access provides an excellent opportunity for the public library to reach out to its community. Although most people are aware of the vast array of resources on the Internet, few have received training and coaching so that they are skilled at accessing information most useful to them and avoiding the many unreliable Internet sites.

Internet access may also reach people who have not been regular library users. It is an opportunity for new patrons to become familiar with the full range of public library resources including print publications which often remain the best, and sometimes the only, source of needed information.

Public library involvement with patron training can range from informal assistance provided one-on-one to more formal classroom-style training sessions. Public libraries that have initiated patron training have found that such training sessions are extremely popular. These libraries have also found that many patrons need very basic instruction in mouse and keyboard use before they can utilize the electronic information sources provided by the library. Some libraries are installing computer training labs to assist with the need for public Internet and computer training.

> Developing web pages with links to useful and reliable local and worldwide information is also an important community service public libraries can offer. These web pages can also provide remote users with information about library hours, phone numbers, and services as well as a link to the library catalog.

The launch of Internet access provides a good opportunity for increasing positive relationships with the entire community including schools and their library media centers. A number of activities could be used to reach out to the community and lend themselves to joint or coordinated programming with the K-12 schools or postsecondary institutions in the community. These partners might

- offer community education classes on Internet resources;
- hold an open house during which educational Internet sites are demonstrated;
- provide clear, well-written handouts and brochures that outline Internet purposes and policies;
- develop programs for community volunteers to assist with Internet use; or
- develop learning opportunities that involve community members, such as e-mail exchanges with seniors

Libraries should use the implementation of this new service creatively to further the entire program of library services in the community.

Appendix A
Selected Bibliography

"Academic Freedom and the Social Studies Teacher." *Social Education*, January 1991, pp. 13-15.

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A practical guide for the rationale and process of policy development and implementation. This book uses a combination of research review, specific description of the process, and cases studies.

American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1998. (ISBN: 0-8389-3470-6)

This new edition of guidelines for school library media programs articulates the role of the school library media program in the school, provides standards for academic achievement in the information literacy area and reaffirms intellectual freedom principles.

American Library Association. *Intellectual Freedom Manual*, 5th ed. Chicago: ALA, Office of Intellectual Freedom, 1996. (ISBN: 0-8389-0677-X)

This book provides an excellent reference for all libraries. Contains official American Library Association intellectual freedom position statements and interpretations, a brief overview of related laws, and chapters related to intellectual freedom in all types of libraries. It also includes specific suggestions for preventive steps, handling complaints and promotion of intellectual freedom.

Block, Heidi J. "Objection to Ideas Doesn't Justify Removal of Books from Library." *Education Forward*, October 1988, pp. 16-17.

This article reviews challenges to school library resources and the resultant legal decisions. It emphasizes the ultimate responsibility of schools boards for handling challenges and the principle that resources cannot be removed simply because the ideas expressed in them are unpopular or disliked.

Bosmajian, Haig A., ed. *The Freedom to Read*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1987.

A collection of 25 court decisions all involving challenges to books or audiovisual resources used in schools. Most cases deal with use as part of classroom instruction.

Brown, Jean E., ed. *Preserving Intellectual Freedom*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1994. (ISBN: 0-8141-3671-0)

A collection of essays which, taken together, presents the theory that censorship is not simply an attempt to control what is taught but also an infringement on the legal learning rights of students. It stresses action rather than reaction and offers insights into how censorship can occur, its impacts and repercussions, and the ways it might be fought.

Cary, Eve; Alan H. Levine; and Janet R. Price. *The Rights of Students*. New York: Puffin Books, 1997. (ISBN:0140377840)

One of the American Civil Liberties Union's series of *Handbooks for Young Americans*. It explains the legal rights and obligations regarding students and includes topics such as freedom of expression, school records, corporal punishment, and more.

Cate, Fred H. *The Internet and the First Amendment: Schools and Sexually Explicit Expression*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1998. (ISBN: 0-87367-398-0)

A thoughtful, balanced, and factual discussion of the legal relationship between the First Amendment and Internet use in schools. It includes references to other legal issues attendant upon Internet access in schools and libraries.

Edwards, June. *Opposing Censorship in the Public Schools*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1998. (ISBN: 0-8058-2546-0)

It presents a thorough and clear case for intellectual freedom in the public schools. This book will assist teachers, administrators, and school librarians to understand the nature of many attempts at censorship and prepare them to defend the use of a wide variety of resources.

Hopkins, Dianne McAfee. "The School Library Media Specialist and Intellectual Freedom During the 20th Century." In *The Emerging School Library Media Center: Historical Issues and Perspectives*, Kathy Latrobe, ed. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1998, pp. 39-55.

An overview of the history of intellectual freedom in school libraries in the 20th century, it includes important research, legal cases, and trends.

_____. "Library Media Challenges: The Wisconsin Experience." *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom*, January 1996, pp. 1, 28, 31.

Summarizes results of a survey of challenges in Wisconsin schools, characteristics of the challenges and the outcomes.

_____. "Put It In Writing: What You Should Know About Challenges to School Library Materials." *School Library Journal*, January 1993, pp. 26-30.

This article explains why the written policy is a must.

Jenkinson, Edward B. *The Schoolbook Protest Movement: 40 Questions and Answers*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1986. (ISBN: 0-87367-432-4)

This publication defines and describes the "schoolbook protest movement" and poses and answers 40 of the most commonly asked questions about attempts to have resources and books removed from the public schools, including strategies and answers for dealing with challenges. It also includes model selection policies and a bibliography.

Kemp, Betty. *School Library and Media Acquisitions Policies and Procedures*, 2nd ed. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx, 1986.

This compilation of school district policies and procedures deals with all aspects of selection, acquisition, processing, and reconsideration. It includes sample forms, bibliographies, and intellectual freedom statements.

McClure, Charles R. *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures*. Chicago and London: American Library Association, 1987. (ISBN: 0-8389-3341-6)

One of three publications in the Public Library Development Program, it describes a step-by-step process for selecting a role, developing a mission, setting goals and objectives, selecting strategies, and evaluating progress.

National Council of Teachers of English. *Guidelines for Dealing With Censorship of Nonprint Materials*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1993. (No. 19611-1450)

These guidelines review the rationale for including nonprint materials in the classroom experience and the challenges to this practice. It gives basic principles that should guide the use of nonprint resources as well as specific suggestions for positive action to prevent censorship.

_____. *The Students' Right to Read*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1982. (No. 48174-1450)

This document contains two strong policy statements that outline professional and community rights in a democratic society. It discusses the nature and impact of censorship attempts concerning curriculum. A second section, "A Program of Action," involves the professional selection of books for the language arts and English curriculum and briefly reviews defense of a questioned book. This 15-page pamphlet is designed to be reprinted, with credit to the NCTE.

Ochoa, Anna S., ed. *Academic Freedom to Teach and to Learn*. Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1990.

This publication describes academic freedom, its significance for democracy, the scope of attacks, review of court decisions, selected case studies, and specific suggestions for handling challenges.

Reichman, Henry. *Censorship and Selection: Issues and Answers for Schools*, rev. ed. Chicago: American Library Association, and Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1993. (ISBN: 0-87652-197-9 or 0-8389-0620-6)

This resource discusses the nature of censorship in schools, arenas of conflict (including the library media center), subjects often challenged, guidelines for writing selection policies, and steps to take when challenges occur. A very good resource for schools.

Simmons, John S., ed. *Censorship; A Threat to Reading, Learning and Thinking*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1994. (ISBN: 0-87207-123-5)

This book presents important censorship cases affecting elementary and secondary education. It contains suggestions for preparing and fighting attacks on classroom materials, with specific plans of action for administrators, teachers, and school library media specialists.

Smith, Mark. *Neal-Schuman Internet Policy Handbook for Libraries*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1999. (ISBN: 1-55570-345-3)

This handbook deals with a wide variety of policy decisions regarding Internet access in school, public, and academic libraries. It includes information related to handling challenges to Internet-related policies and procedures.

Symons, Ann K., and Charles Harmon. *Protecting the Right to Read: A How-To-Do-It Manual for School and Public Librarians*. New York and London: Neal-Schuman, 1995. (ISBN: 1-55570-216-3)

This manual includes the basic principles of intellectual freedom, guidelines for necessary policies, specific issues for school and public libraries, and sections on the Internet. It includes a case study and discussion of current trends and issues.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Information and Technology Literacy*. Madison: WDPI, 1998.

This book describes Wisconsin's academic standards for grades 4, 8, and 12 for information and technology literacy, which encompasses traditional library and information skills along with computer skills.

_____. *Wisconsin Public Library Trustee Handbook*, rev. ed. Madison: WDPI, 1998. (Bulletin # 98210)

This handbook reviews the statutory role of library trustees in Wisconsin and the responsibilities of library boards.

_____. *Wisconsin Public Library Standards*. Madison: WDPI, 1994. (ISBN: 1-57337-007-X)

This document recommends standards for local public libraries in Wisconsin, including technological resources and reaching out to a wider community of users.

Appendix B
Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Rules

Standard h

Wisconsin Statute 121.02(1) The school board shall

(h) Provide adequate instructional materials, texts, and library services which reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society.

Administrative Rule

The Department of Public Instruction administrative rules relating to this standard require the following.

Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 8.01(2)(h) Library media services. Each school district board shall:

1. Have on file a written, long-range plan for library services development which has been formulated by teachers, library and audiovisual personnel and administrators, and approved by the school district board.

2. Designate a licensed library media person to direct and coordinate the district's library media program.

3. Provide library facilities within the school building and make available to all pupils a current, balanced collection of books, basic reference materials, texts, periodicals, and audiovisual materials which depicts in an accurate and unbiased way the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society.

4. Provide library media services to all pupils as follows: to pupils in grades kindergarten through 6, library media services which are performed by or under the direction of licensed library and audiovisual personnel; and to pupils in grades 7 through 12, library media services which are performed by licensed library and audiovisual personnel.

Pupil Nondiscrimination

Wisconsin Statute 118.13

(1) No person may be denied admission to any public school or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity because of the person's sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

(2) (a) Each school board shall develop written policies and procedures to implement this section and submit them to the state superintendent as part of its 1986 annual report under s. 120.18. The policies and procedures shall provide for receiving and investigating complaints by residents of the school district regarding possible violations of this section, for making determinations as to whether this section has been violated and for ensuring compliance with this section.

(b) Any person who receives a negative determination under par. (a) may appeal the determination to the state superintendent.

(3) (a) The state superintendent shall:

1. Decide appeals made to him or her under sub. (2)(b). Decisions of the state superintendent under this subdivision are subject to judicial review under ch. 227.

2. Promulgate rules necessary to implement and administer this section.

3. Include in the department's biennial report under s. 15.04(1)(d) information on the status of school district complaints with this section and school district progress toward providing reasonable equality of educational opportunity for all pupils in this state.

(b) The state superintendent shall:

1. Periodically review school district programs, activities and services to determine whether the school boards are complying with this section by providing information and technical assistance upon request.

Administrative Rule

The Education Committee of the Wisconsin State Assembly has approved Chapter PI 9, Wisconsin Administrative Code, which implements Section 118.13 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Section 118.13 prohibits pupil discrimination and is intended to insure equal treatment for all students.

PI 9 specifies the areas in which a school board must have policies and procedures to avoid discrimination. The policies must address library media, instructional, counseling, and testing materials; admissions procedures; discipline, facilities; athletics; and food service. The relevant portion of PI 9 is given below.

Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 9.03 Policies

(1) Each board shall develop policies prohibiting discrimination against pupils. The policies shall include the following areas:

. . . (e) an instructional and library media materials selection policy consistent with s. 121.02(1) (h), Stats., and s. PI 8.01(2)(h).

Libraries and Educational Institutions

Wisconsin Statute 944.11(4)

(a) The legislature finds that the libraries and educational institutions under par. (b) carry out the essential purpose of making available to all citizens a current, balanced collection of books, reference materials, periodicals, sound recordings and audiovisual materials that reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society. The legislature further finds that it is in the interest of the state to protect the financial resources of libraries and educational institutions from being expended in litigation and to permit these resources to be used to the greatest extent possible for fulfilling the essential purpose of libraries and educational institutions.

(b) No person who is an employe, a member of the board of directors or a trustee of any of the following is liable to prosecution for violation of this section for acts or omissions while in his or her capacity as an employe, a member of the board of directors or a trustee:

1. A public elementary or secondary school.
2. A private school, as defined in s. 115.001 (3r).
3. Any school offering vocational, technical or adult education that:
   a. Is a technical college, is a school approved by the department of education under s. 38.51 or is a school described in s. 38.51 (9) (f), (g) or (h); and
   b. Is exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) (3) of the internal revenue code, as defined in s. 71.01 (6).
4. Any institution of higher education that is accredited, as described in s. 39.30 (1) (d), and is exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) (3) of the internal revenue code, as defined in s. 71.01 (6).
5. A library that receives funding from any unit of government.

Appendix C
Intellectual Freedom Statement

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948; amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks:
An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Introduction

The world is in the midst of an electronic communications revolution. Based on its constitutional, ethical, and historical heritage, American librarianship is uniquely positioned to address the broad range of information issues being raised in this revolution. In particular, librarians address intellectual freedom from a strong ethical base and an abiding commitment to the preservation of the individual's rights.

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. These rights

extend to minors as well as adults. Libraries and librarians exist to facilitate the exercise of these rights by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology.

The American Library Association expresses these basic principles of librarianship in its *Code of Ethics* and in the *Library Bill of Rights*. These serve to guide librarians and library governing bodies in addressing issues of intellectual freedom that arise when the library provides access to electronic information, services, and networks.

Issues arising from the still-developing technology of computer-mediated information generation, distribution, and retrieval need to be approached and regularly reviewed from a context of constitutional principles and ALA policies so that fundamental and traditional tenets of librarianship are not swept away.

Electronic information flows across boundaries and barriers despite attempts by individuals, governments, and private entities to channel or control it. Even so, many people, for reasons of technology, infrastructure, or socio-economic status do not have access to electronic information.

In making decisions about how to offer access to electronic information, each library should consider its mission, goals, objectives, cooperative agreements, and the needs of the entire community it serves.

The Rights of Users

All library system and network policies, procedures or regulations relating to electronic resources and services should be scrutinized for potential violation of user rights.

User policies should be developed according to the policies and guidelines established by the American Library Association, including *Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities.*

Users should not be restricted or denied access for expressing or receiving constitutionally protected speech. Users' access should not be changed without due process, including, but not limited to, formal notice and a means of appeal.

Although electronic systems may include distinct property rights and security concerns, such elements may not be employed as a subterfuge to deny users' access to information. Users have the right to be free of unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others. Contracts, agreements, and licenses entered into by libraries on behalf of their users should not violate this right. Users also have a right to information, training and assistance necessary to operate the hardware and software provided by the library.

Users have both the right of confidentiality and the right of privacy. The library should uphold these rights by policy, procedure, and practice. Users should be advised, however, that because security is technically difficult to achieve, electronic transactions and files could become public.

The rights of users who are minors shall in no way be abridged.

Equity of Access

Electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be equally, readily and equitably accessible to all library users. American Library Association policies oppose the charging of user fees for the provision of information services by all libraries and information services that receive their major support from public funds (50.3; 53.1.14; 60.1; 61.1). It should be the goal of all libraries to develop policies concerning access to electronic resources in light of *Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights* and *Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities.*

Information Resources and Access

Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing material for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present special problems. Some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to information available via electronic resources because of its allegedly controversial content or because of the librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Information retrieved or utilized electronically should be considered constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court with appropriate jurisdiction.

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, must support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user's age or the content of the material. Libraries have an obligation to provide access to government information available in electronic format. Libraries and librarians should not deny access to information solely on the grounds that it is perceived to lack value.

In order to prevent the loss of information, and to preserve the cultural record, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained electronically.

Electronic resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Libraries and librarians should provide access to information presenting all points of view. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement. These principles

pertain to electronic resources no less than they do to the more traditional sources of information in libraries.

Adopted January 24, 1996, by the ALA Council.

Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The school library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the Library Bill of Rights apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs.

School library media professionals assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School library media professionals work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media professionals cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources appropriate to the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources which support curriculum and are consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school district. Resources in school library media collections represent diverse points of view and current as well as historical issues.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equal access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources which reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media professionals resist efforts by individuals to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, or hear.

Major barriers between students and resources include: imposing age or grade level restrictions on the use of resources, limiting the use of

interlibrary loan and access to electronic information, charging fees for information in specific formats, requiring permission from parents or teachers, establishing restricted shelves or closed collections, and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

The school board adopts policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by the persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media professionals implement district policies and procedures in the school.

Adopted July 2, 1986; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The idea of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to

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take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

The above is a Joint Statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers. This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers. Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, and January 16, 1991, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

Appendix D
Challenges to Materials in School Libraries

Objection to ideas doesn't justify removal of books from library

Education Forward, October 1988

by Heidi J. Block
DPI Assistant Legal Counsel

Objections to certain books on the shelves of school libraries create a difficult situation for school district personnel. Many school librarians, administrators, and school board members are understandably confused about how to deal properly with challenges to school library books, some of which are considered to be classics of children's literature.

The range of books and visual materials that have been challenged across the country is wide and varied. Hundreds of different books and films have been challenged in the past five years, including books such as *Catcher in the Rye, The Diary of Anne Frank,* and *The Grapes of Wrath*; films such as a *A Christmas Story, Ghostbusters, Never Cry Wolf,* and *Romeo and Juliet;* and magazines including *Redbook, Ms., Newsweek, Young Miss,* and *Sports Illustrated*.

This article will focus on some recent challenges to books in Wisconsin school libraries and on the case law that we recommend schools use as a guide in handling these complaints.

Recent Challenges

Recently in Wisconsin there have been many challenges to books on the shelves of school libraries. Challengers have included parents, school personnel, school board members, ministers, and Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum. Books challenged include the novels *Vision Quest, Blubber,* and *Slaughterhouse Five* and the reference book *A Woman's Body: An Owner's Manual*. Resolutions have included out-right banning of books, restricting books to students with parental permission to read them, and retaining books with no restrictions.

Department of Public Instruction staff are frequently asked questions regarding challenges to books in school libraries. Questions include: Who should decide how to respond to an objection? What factors should be considered in making such a decision? Is it legal to remove a particular book from a school library? Is it legal to restrict circulation of certain books to students with parental permission? Is it a violation of the law to *fail to remove* or restrict certain challenged books?

Responding to Objections

According to Wisconsin statutes, school boards have the possession, care, control, and management of the property and affairs of the school dis-

trict.[1] Therefore, school boards are responsible for deciding whether or not to remove or place restrictions on certain books in school libraries. School administrators may make rules *but must have the consent of the school board*[2]. Since school administrators are employed by and work under the direction of school boards,[3] administrators *may not* unilaterally make decisions regarding book removals or restrictions without the school board's approval.

While school boards ultimately make the decision to remove or restrict a book, they must adhere to certain legal guidelines in making that decision. If a school board does not pay attention to the case law on this subject, it risks illegally removing or restricting books, a practice that may not hold up to a challenge in court.

The major law that school library book removals or restrictions may violate is the U.S. Constitution. Two cases must be analyzed to determine what the law is in Wisconsin regarding book removals from school libraries. (Several cases have been decided in various states regarding the removal of books from *required reading lists*; however, this article will only discuss cases regarding removals from *school libraries*.)

The book removal cases are *Zykan v. Warsaw Community School Corp.*[4] and *Board of Education v. Pico*.[5] The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit decided *Zykan* in 1980. The U.S. Supreme Court decided *Pico* in 1982. Cases decided by the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals are binding law in Wisconsin. However, cases decided by the Supreme Court overrule the Seventh Circuit if the decisions conflict with one another.

Zykan Case

In this case, a high school student and a former high school student brought an action alleging that school board members and employees violated their First and Fourteenth Amendment rights by removing certain books from the Warsaw, Ind., high school library.[6] One of the books removed from the school premises was a textbook titled *Values Clarification*. It was removed by the school board and then conveyed to a local senior citizens group for a public burning. The book *Go Ask Alice* also was removed from the school library.

In Indiana, as in Wisconsin, local school boards are responsible for the governance of secondary school education. In *Zykan*, the court reiterated that this grant of broad discretion means that there are only limited constitutional constraints on the form and content of decisions of local school boards acting within statutory bounds. However, the court reasoned, control of matters not immediately affecting classroom activities is subject to numerous qualifications. The *Zykan* court decided that in order for a student's constitutional rights to have been violated, the school board, in taking the action that it did, must have been guided by an interest in imposing *some religious or scientific orthodoxy* or by a desire to *eliminate a particular inquiry* generally.

The Seventh Circuit recognized in *Zykan* that several courts have held that once a book has been offered as part of the school library collection, school authorities may not remove it simply because they or anyone else objects to its content.[7] However, the *Zykan* court chose to allow school

boards greater authority in this area. The court stated that *a book may not be removed from a school library as part of a purge of all material offensive to a single, exclusive perception of the way of the world.*

It should be noted, however, that in rejecting the Sixth Circuit's and other courts' decisions, which have held that school authorities may not remove a book because of objections to its content, the *Zykan* court relied on a lower court's decision in *Board of Education v. Pico* which has since been overturned by the U. S. Supreme Court (see following discussion).

Therefore, while some guidance can be gleaned from *Zykan* in that a book may not be removed from a school library in the interest of imposing some religious or scientific orthodoxy or eliminating a particular kind of inquiry generally, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Pico* has placed *further restrictions* on a school board's authority to remove books from school libraries.

Pico Case

The decision in this case is the current "state of the law" regarding book removals from school libraries. The question presented to the Supreme Court in *Pico* was whether the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution[8] imposes limitations on local school boards' exercise of their discretion to remove books from high school and junior high school libraries.

In response to complaints by a parents' organization, the school board of the Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26, in New York, removed *A Reader for Writers* from the junior high library and the following nine books from the shelves of the high school library:

- *Slaughterhouse Five*
- *The Naked Ape*
- *Down These Mean Streets*
- *Best Short Stories of Negro Writers*
- *Go Ask Alice*
- *Laughing Boy*
- *Black Boy*
- *A Hero Ain't Nothing But a Sandwich*
- *Soul on Ice*

The board then appointed a "Book Review Committee" of parents and school staff to read the books and make recommendations to the board as to what should be done with each book. The committee recommended that some of the books be retained and that one be available only with parental approval. However, the board rejected the committee's proposal and removed all of the books from the school libraries except *Laughing Boy*; it made *Black Boy* available to students only with parental permission.

Steven Pico, Jacqueline Gold, Glen Yarris, Russell Rieger, and Paul Sochinski, students at the junior high and high school, filed a lawsuit alleging that the board's action in removing and restricting these books denied them their rights under the First Amendment.

The district court upheld the board's decision and ruled that the board acted not on religious principles but on its "conservative educational philosophy" and its belief that the books were "irrelevant, vulgar, immoral and in bad taste..." However, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reversed the district court's judgment. The Second Circuit decided that the board removed the books because of its "impermissible desire to suppress ideas" rather than because of a "justifiable desire to remove books containing vulgarities and sexual explicitness...." The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the judgment of the court of appeals.

The Supreme Court held that "the First Amendment rights of students may be directly and sharply implicated by the removal of books from the shelves of a school library" and that "the Constitution protects the right to receive information and ideas." Also, more importantly, the Court stated that "the special characteristics of the school *library* make that environment especially appropriate for the recognition of the First Amendment rights of students."

The Court recognized and referred to "the unique role of the school library," in that school libraries "afford students an opportunity at self-education and individual enrichment that is wholly optional." The Court ruled that school boards *do not have absolute discretion to remove books from their school libraries.*

Next, the Court addressed the extent to which the First Amendment places limitations on school boards' discretion to remove books from their libraries. The Court held that the U.S. Constitution does not permit the official suppression of *ideas*, and whether a school board may remove books depends upon the *motivation* behind its action. A school board violates the law if it removes books to deny students access to ideas with which the board *disagrees*, according to the Court.

The Court indicated that it would probably be valid for a school board to remove a book from a school library if the book is "pervasively vulgar." The Court concluded, "In brief, we hold that local school boards may not remove books from school library shelves simply because they dislike the ideas contained in those books and seek by their removal to prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion. Such purposes stand inescapably condemned by our precedents."

Circulation Restrictions

In its *Pico* decision, the Court did not distinguish between the books that were actually removed from the library and the book *Black Boy* which was retained but restricted to students with parental permission. Since the Supreme Court did not make this distinction, it could be argued that their decision also applies to circulation restrictions. If this is the case, circulation restrictions to students with parental permission may also be illegal unless the restricted books are "pervasively vulgar."

Conclusion

School boards are responsible for responding to challenges to school library materials. School boards may not remove books from school

libraries simply because they dislike the ideas those books contain. Books may not be removed in an effort to prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion. School boards may remove materials from school libraries if they are "pervasively vulgar."

While it has not been definitively stated that these rules also apply to circulation restrictions, a good argument can be made that the same rules apply due to the fact that the Supreme Court considered both book removals and circulation restrictions and made no distinction between the two.

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1. Section 120.12(1), Wis. Stats.
2. Section 120.13(1)(b), Wis. Stats.
3. Section 118.24(2)(a), Wis. Stats.
4. 631 F.2d 1300 (7th Cir. 1980).
5. 457 U.S. 853 (1982).
6. The plaintiffs in this case also alleged that the removal of certain books from the curriculum and the failure to rehire certain teachers was unconstitutional; however, this discussion is restricted to their claims regarding book removals from the school library.
7. See *Minarcini v. Strongsville City School District*, 541 F.2d 577 (6th Cir. 1976); *Salvail v. Nashua Bd. of Ed.*, 469 7. Supp. 1269 (NH 1979); and *Right to Read Defense Committee of Chelsea v. School Committee of Chelsea*, 454 F. Supp. 703 (Mass. 1978).
8. The amendment provides in pertinent part that "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press."

Editor's note: This discussion of a school law issue is not intended to provide legal advice for resolving specific problems; it is intended only as general information. For legal advice on specific problems, consult your school district's attorney.

Appendix E
Sources of Assistance

Any organizations selected for requests for assistance should be contacted as soon as possible. As with most problems of this nature, it is best to seek assistance as soon as the problem takes shape. Early involvement provides an opportunity to explore potential solutions and may eliminate the need to correct mistakes growing from emotional and time pressures the individual might face. The following resources are of three types: state agencies, state associations, and national associations.

A. State Agencies

Cooperative Children's Book Center

Purpose

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) is a noncirculating examination, study, and research library where individuals and groups may examine, read, and evaluate books for children and young adults. The CCBC includes an almost complete collection of the juvenile trade books published within the past two years; a core collection of older, significant titles; and a historical collection.

The CCBC was established in 1963 for adults with a professional, academic, or career interest in the study of teaching children's and young adult literature. The CCBC is a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is supported in part by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, especially through its Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning.

Specific Assistance Available

The CCBC is especially useful to Wisconsin residents seeking a range of professional opinions about specific children's and young adult books through the CCBC's review files and professional periodicals collection. When the appropriateness of a specific children's or young adult trade book is questioned for school or public library collections or for classroom use, the CCBC staff will search for professional published reviews and provide an oral or written list of these sources, a general summary of reviewers' evaluations, or copies of the reviews themselves.

The author and/or illustrator also may have written about the book. This can supplement the information described above if such background information would be useful. Sometimes information about recommended lists upon which the book appears (such as the *Children's Catalog*) and awards or distinctions given the book can also be cited for books which are in question.

Availability of useful information often depends upon other factors, such as the length of time since the book was published, the general nature of professional evaluations and reviews at the time when the book was initially published, or the professional response to the book beyond a

certain locale or region. However, whenever additional data can supplement basic review information, it will be provided.

Information about the genre of the book under question also may be useful. Information about the general curricular or age appropriateness of specific theme(s) or subject(s) in questioned books also might be helpful.

To contact the CCBC:
Ginny Moore Kruse, Director
Cooperative Children's Book Center
4290 Helen C. White Hall
600 North Park Street
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: (608) 263-3721/ 3720/3930
FAX: (608) 262-4933
E-mail:
ccbcinfo@education.wisc.edu
Website
www.education.wisc.edu/ ccbc/

When to Contact the CCBC

Information described above should be sought from the CCBC as soon as a question arises within a school, classroom, library media center, or public library. Any conversations about a title in question become more fully informed discussions when such background information is in hand. Often a potential censorship problem has been handled to the satisfaction of all involved in just this way.

The CCBC staff assists persons with such questions by phone and/or by mail. Inquiries should be as specific and accurate as possible, including the complete book title, author's complete name, name of the publisher, copyright date, the nature of the complaint or question, specific information which may provide most useful, and the relative need for a quick response (for example, within the hour, before the end of the day, or before the end of the week).

How You Will Be Contacted

- If only review citations are needed, telephone queries of this nature can sometimes be answered while a caller holds the line.
- More detailed telephone information will be given by a return call later the same day or early the following day, if necessary.
- Letters concerning this type of query are answered as soon as all available information can be located and will be mailed the following day. When the requested information is mailed, a notation will indicate the total amount to be reimbursed to the CCBC in stamps or cash for postage and photocopying of information. Reimbursement for postage and copies is requested because the CCBC has a limited budget. Staff time is provided at no charge.
- The CCBC will send requested material by overnight express mail if asked to do so, but the cost of such delivery must be reimbursed.
- The CCBC can FAX information to the library media specialist, teacher, or administrator requesting it, if this will be helpful.
- E-mail requests for information must include the complete address and phone number of the person requesting the information.

Whom to Contact

Ask for either the CCBC director or the CCBC Intellectual Freedom Services coordinator. If neither person is available, provide information about the book and the complaint and indicate the time(s) you can be reached by phone that day or the following day. If you will be at a different telephone number later in the day or week, be sure to specify this when leaving a message. If you cannot be reached at the school or library on the following day, leave a phone number and other times at which you can be reached. If CCBC staff do not talk with you when you first call, either the CCBC director or the Intellectual Freedom Services coordinator will contact you to make sure you receive the information you need.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction—Content and Learning Team

Teachers, library media specialists, and administrators may wish to contact specific subject-area consultants. The Content and Learning Team includes consultants for all major content areas. Contact these consultants as soon as you have an expression of concern or complaint which focuses on a specific curricular area.

To contact the DPI/CLT
Director, Content and Learning Team
125 South Webster Street
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
Phone: (608) 266-2364
FAX: (608) 266-1965
E-mail:
susan.grady@dpi.state.wi.us

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction—Instructional Media and Technology Team

Purpose

The purpose of the Instructional Media and Technology Team is to provide leadership, service, and advocacy for equitable access to and effective use of information, resources, and instructional technology in Wisconsin PK-12 schools to ensure successful lifelong learning. The team provides expertise and related professional development for developing and integrating

- all aspects of school library media facilities and services;
- exemplary and proven educational programs and practices; and
- instructional technology, including distance learning, telecomputing, and telecommunications

into curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Among the team's objectives is helping schools develop selection policies and prepare to deal appropriately with challenges to library resources. Upon request, team staff are available to

- confer with school library media and administrative personnel in developing appropriate strategies for dealing with problems relating to complaints;
- provide sample selection policies; and
- provide names and addresses of other agencies that may be helpful.

To contact the DPI/IMTT
Director, Instructional Media and Technology Team
125 South Webster Street
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
Phone: (608) 266-3856
FAX: (608) 267-1052
E-mail:
neah.lohr@dpi.state.wi.us

When to Contact

The team should be contacted at the time services are needed. Since the team staff is small, library media specialists should plan to allow as much time as possible for a response.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction—Public Library Development Team

Purpose

The purpose of the Public Library Development Team is to provide leadership, service, and advocacy for Wisconsin public libraries. The team provides expertise and related professional development for all aspects of public library services.

Among the team's objectives is helping public libraries develop selection policies and prepare to deal appropriately with challenges to library resources. Upon request, team staff are available to

To contact the DPI/PLD:
Public Library Administration Consultant
Public Library Development Team
125 South Webster Street
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
Phone: (608) 267-9225
FAX: (608) 267-1052
E-mail:
michael.cross@dpi.state.wi.us

- confer with public library personnel in developing appropriate strategies for dealing with problems relating to complaints;
- provide sample selection policies;
- provide sample acceptable Internet use policies; and
- provide names and addresses of other agencies that may be helpful.

When to Contact

The team should be contacted at the time services are needed. Since the team staff is small, librarians should plan to allow as much time as possible for a response.

State Associations

Wisconsin Association of School Boards

To contact WASB:
Policy Services Coordinator
Wisconsin Association of School Boards
122 West Washington Avenue, Suite 400
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 257-2622
FAX: (608) 257-8386
E-mail:
ndorman@wasb.org
Website:
www.wasb.org

Purpose

The mission of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) is to provide visionary leadership to Wisconsin school boards and to support, through quality services, their pursuit of educational excellence for each student.

A nonprofit, membership organization, the WASB strives to fulfill its mission by offering school board members leadership training along with information and services to school districts in a variety of areas. These include school law, education policy, legislative activity and employee relations. The WASB Policy Services staff continually strive to develop, collect, and disseminate the latest information to guide school districts in their policy development. All Wisconsin school boards are members of WASB, which allows them access to this information.

Whom to Contact

Contact the WASB Policy Services coordinator directly to ask specific questions about policy topics of interest, to request sample school district policies, and to request assistance in reviewing or updating school district policies or procedures.

Wisconsin Education Association Council

To contact WEAC:
Executive Director
Wisconsin Education Association Council
33 Nob Hill Drive
Madison, WI 53713
Phone: (608) 276-7711
FAX: (608) 276-8203
Website:
www.weac.org

Purpose

The general purpose of the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) is to assist local affiliates and their members to improve their economic and professional welfare and to promote instructional improvement.

Specific Assistance Available

The school library media specialist, like any other WEAC member, has available the counsel of the local affiliate, the UniServ director, and the WEAC regional coordinator. The latter two may have had experience in dealing with similar problems in a different location. WEAC and the National Education Association may have precise information and/or materials to assist in addressing the problem.

If required, a library media specialist has the opportunity to present the problem to WEAC's legal division through a UniServ director or to an appropriate committee or commission of the state or national organization.

Wisconsin Educational Media Association

Purpose

The Wisconsin Educational Media Association (WEMA) is a professional association dedicated to improving teaching and learning through the development and effective use of all forms of media and technology. The association promotes the concepts of intellectual freedom for all students and encourages school districts to develop sound selection policies covering all types of media and information resources.

As a state affiliate of the American Association of School Libraries, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, and the International Society for Technology in Education, WEMA endorses their intellectual freedom documents and supports their activities and programs related to opposing censorship.

WEMA has an active Intellectual Freedom Committee which addresses censorship issues in school library media centers around the state. Programs on developing selection policies as well as other policies related to the use of both print and electronic media are frequently presented at its conferences. WEMA has taken an active role in opposing censorship legislation and in ensuring exemptions for libraries from those laws that pass.

To contact WEMA:
Association Secretary
Wisconsin Educational Media Association
1300 Industrial Drive
Fennimore, WI 53809
Phone: (608) 822-5884
FAX: (608) 822-3828
Website:
www.wemaonline.org

Specific Assistance Available

WEMA will assist any library media specialist who encounters censorship problems to locate appropriate help within the state or at the national level. Referral to other media specialists with experience in dealing with censorship issues and to other agencies is often possible. On the advice of the Executive Committee, the association may make public statements and communicate with the parties involved.

Whom to Contact

For assistance with censorship issues, contact the WEMA office, any officer of the association, or the chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Wisconsin Federation of Teachers

Purpose

The Wisconsin Federation of Teachers (WFT) is a statewide federation of 54 local unions representing educators, education support staff, and state employees. WFT primarily represents its members in their relations with employers. WFT also seeks to promote educational opportunities and to promote democratic practices in the schools which will better enable students to take their places in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of the community.

To contact WFT:
President
Wisconsin Federation of Teachers
1334 Applegate Road
Madison, WI 53713
Phone: (608) 277-7700
FAX: (608) 277-7708
Website:
www.wft.org

Specific Assistance Available

Assistance is available to members facing alleged violations of academic freedom, civil or tenure rights, or employment or job security. WFT also has access to national and statewide resources on censorship issues as local school boards formulate policies on student access.

Whom to Contact

At the local level, requests for assistance usually originate with leaders in a local union. If necessary, the staff representative and attorney are available to help resolve a local problem. Representation with the superintendent or before the school board may also be necessary.

Wisconsin Library Association— Intellectual Freedom Committee

Purpose

The Wisconsin Library Association has both an Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) and an Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT). The Committee carries out the activities described below, while the Round Table is a membership group that concentrates on programming to inform its members and support intellectual freedom in all libraries.

The purposes of WLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee are to

- make recommendations to the WLA Board of Directors and Association members relative to WLA policies on issues of intellectual freedom;
- stimulate understanding on the part of librarians and the public of the concept of intellectual freedom and the problem of censorship;
- act as a liaison between libraries and the public, including legislators, and inform the media about WLA positions in specific situations;
- coordinate the recruitment and retention of members for the Intellectual Freedom Network to assist Wisconsin librarians, media specialists, library trustees, or library employees when intellectual freedom challenges occur;
- assist with intellectual freedom challenges that come before the Committee;
- refer librarians threatened with the loss of their position because of an intellectual freedom issue to the ACLU as a means of obtaining legal support;
- support the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom in its efforts to provide financial support for librarians when they are fired because of an intellectual freedom issue;
- interpret for Wisconsin librarians the developments that occur related to providing a support fund and the conditions of eligibility for drawing from it;
- support the work of the WLA Intellectual Freedom Round Table in presenting programs to promote an understanding of intellectual freedom issues among WLA members;

To contact WLA/IFC:
Executive Director
Wisconsin Library Association
5250 East Terrace Drive, Suite A1
Madison, WI 53718-8345
Phone: (608) 245-3640
FAX: (608) 245-3646
E-mail:
strand@scls.lib.wi.us
Website:
www.wla.lib.wi.us

- carry out the recommendations of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee that apply to furthering intellectual freedom among Wisconsin libraries, librarians, and the public; and
- work within the framework of the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom in planning and implementing state intellectual freedom activities.

Specific Assistance Available

The Wisconsin Intellectual Freedom Committee is a seven-member standing committee of the Wisconsin Library Association. It is made up of Association members who have volunteered to serve on this committee because of their interest in the issues of intellectual freedom. Members of the IFC are knowledgeable of policies and current issues regarding intellectual freedom.

There is no charge to anyone who requests help from committee members. Specific assistance includes reference materials; access to forms to use in cases of a complaint; contact with local members of the intellectual freedom network who may provide visits to the community, letter writing campaigns, and telephone support; and referrals to the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom for additional advice and consultation and to others with intellectual freedom expertise.

National Organizations

American Civil Liberties Union Foundation

Purpose

The general purpose or goal of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is to take whatever action is necessary to protect and preserve the Bill of Rights to the Constitution. Central to the Foundation's concern is protection of freedom of expression and due process of law, both of which are essential elements in the censorship situation.

To contact the ACLU:
American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin
207 East Buffalo Street, Suite 325
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone: (414) 272-4032
Website:
www.aclu-wi.org/resources/

Specific Assistance Available

The American Civil Liberties Union will consider court representation of an individual facing a censorship challenge or feeling pressured to make decisions regarding including or excluding materials from a school or library. The ACLU also assists with advice on how to handle the practical politics that surround attempts to have materials excluded from public schools. The ACLU has sent representatives to testify before school boards considering policies that would unduly restrict First Amendment freedoms for librarians and teachers. The ACLU will review policies that are applied to decisions on curriculum or media materials. The Foundation has a strong commitment to advocating protection of First Amendment rights in such controversies. There is no cost to the requester for ACLU services. If litigation is approved, an ACLU attorney donates his or her time, and costs are paid by a small foundation.

American Association of School Librarians

To contact AASL:
Executive Director
American Association of School Librarians
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 944-6780, ext. 4385
1 (800) 545-2433, ext. 4385
FAX: (312) 664-7459
Website:
www.ala.org

Purpose

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) is interested in the general improvement and extension of library media services for children and young people. AASL has specific responsibility for: planning a program of study and service for the improvement and extension of library media services in elementary and secondary schools as a means of strengthening the educational program; evaluation, selection, interpretation, and utilization of media as it is used in the context of the school program; stimulation of continuous study and research in the library field; and establishing criteria of evaluation.

Specific Assistance Available

The Association will provide bibliographic information and written data offering a course of action for the library media specialist who is facing censorship problems in the selection and evaluation of instructional materials.

Association for Library Service to Children

To contact ALSC:
Executive Director
Association for Library Service to Children
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 944-6780, ext. 2162
1 (800) 545-2433, ext. 2162
FAX: (312) 944-7671
website:
www.ala.org

Purpose

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) is interested in improving and extending library services to children in all types of libraries. It is responsible for evaluating and selecting book and nonbook library materials and for improving techniques of library services to children from preschool through eighth grade or junior high school age, when such materials or techniques are intended for use in more than one type of library.

Specific Assistance Available

The ALSC makes available:

- materials which may help to avoid problems;
- information on specific materials being questioned (for example, ALSC may be able to provide information about lists on which materials appear, awards they have won, and similar information).
- advice;
- support through letters, telephone calls, and, if needed, through the Office for Intellectual Freedom's Freedom to Read Foundation, which finances court cases.

American Library Association—Office for Intellectual Freedom

The American Library Association has three youth services divisions and an Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF). Although all four are listed here, the Office for Intellectual Freedom is best equipped to help with intellectual freedom issues.

Purpose

The Office's purpose is three-fold:

- to educate librarians and the public regarding the importance of the concept of intellectual freedom as embodied in the Library Bill of Rights;
- to make publicly visible the ALA's concern with issues involving intellectual freedom and censorship; and
- to assist librarians through a wide variety of mechanisms to resist censorship pressures brought to bear on their libraries.

Specific Assistance Available

The OIF offers practical advice on censorship and intellectual freedom issues to assist librarians in implementing a program of censorship prevention. Assistance includes the development of a materials selection statement and procedures for handling complaints. In addition, the OIF can assist with preparing position papers, letters to the editor, and similar materials either from the librarian's point of view or from the ALA.

The Office offers educational materials on the First Amendment and censorship, including the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*, published by the ALA, and the *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom*, a bimonthly update of intellectual freedom activities around the nation. Many other publications address specific censorship topics. Staff members are also available to speak at or participate in meetings or workshops that cover subjects related to the work of the OIF. If an OIF staff member is asked to speak at a meeting or conference, the hosting institution is asked to pay expenses.

Finally, through the Freedom to Read Foundation and the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund, the OIF is able to offer financial and legal assistance to librarians involved in intellectual freedom conflicts.

To contact the OIF:
Director or Associate Director
Office for Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 944-6780, ext. 4222 or 4224
1 (800) 545-2433, ext. 4222 or 4224
FAX: (312) 440-9374
Website:
www.ala.org/work/freedom/lbr.html

Young Adult Library Services Association

Purpose

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) is interested in improving and extending services to young people in all types of libraries. YALSA has specific responsibility for evaluating and selecting books and nonbook materials and interpreting and assisting in the use of materials for young adults, except when such materials are designated for only one type of library.

Specific Assistance Available

YALSA provides materials to advise the librarian or library media specialist working with young adults of available services and support for resisting local pressure and community action and pressures designed to infringe on the rights of young adult users.

It will attempt to provide support for a particular book's acceptance in the young adult library community.

To contact YALSA:
Executive Director
Young Adult Library Services Association
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 944-6780, ext. 4390
1 (800) 545-2433
FAX: (312) 664-7459

Additional Websites

The following list of website addresses is short. It includes web sites for government agencies and professional associations. These sites will, in turn, lead the user to hundreds of additionally relevant sites.

The Freedom Forum

Website: www.freedomforum.org/

The Freedom Forum is a nonpartisan, international foundation dedicated to free press, free speech, and free spirit for all people. The foundation pursues its priorities through conferences, educational activities, publishing, broadcasting, online services, fellowships, partnerships, training, research, and other programs.

The Freedom Forum funds only its own programs and related partnerships. Operating programs including the Newseum at The Freedom Forum World Center headquarters in Arlington, VA; the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN; the Media Studies Center in New York City; and the Pacific Coast Center in San Francisco.

Freedom to Read Foundation

Website: www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/ftrf_home.html

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees all individuals the right to express their ideas without governmental interference as well as to read and listen to the ideas of others. The Freedom to Read Foundation was established to promote and defend this right; to foster libraries and institutions wherein every individual's First Amendment freedoms are fulfilled; and to support the right of libraries to include in their collections and make available any work which they may legally acquire.

International Reading Association

Website: www.ira.org/

The International Reading Association (IRA) seeks to promote high levels of literacy for all by improving the quality of reading instruction. The IRA studies reading processes and teaching techniques; serves as a clearinghouse for disseminating reading research through conferences, journals, and other publications; and actively encouraging lifelong reading.

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science

Website: www.nclis.gov/

The NCLIS is an independent agency within the executive branch of the federal government. The Commission has primary responsibility for developing or recommending overall plans for and advising appropriate government agencies on libraries and information policy. It conducts studies, surveys, and analyses of the library and informational needs of the nation.

National Council of Teachers of English

Website: www.ncte.org

The National Council of Teachers of English is devoted to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning

Website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/index.html

The Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning will place this handbook on its website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/imt. It will make changes to the document online to keep it up-to-date. The division also maintains several web pages which provide many links to useful intellectual freedom sites. Three of these sites are listed below:

- *Issues in Public Access to the Internet in Public Libraries*
  Website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/netissue.html
- *Education, Technology, and the Internet*
  Website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/lib_res.html
- *Library Resource List*
  Website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/lib_res.html

Wisconsin Educational Media Association— Intellectual Freedom Links

Website: www.marshfield.k12.wi.us/wema/IFZar.html

WEMA is a nonprofit professional association of over 1,000 library media professionals. It has developed a web site with many useful intellectual freedom links.

Wisconsin Library Association— Intellectual Freedom Round Table

Website: www.msoe.edu/~shimek/ifrt.html

The Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) is a nonprofit educational organization with the purpose of improving and promoting library and information services and practice for the people of Wisconsin. Two groups have been organized within WLA to promote these intellectual freedom goals. The Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) and the Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT) provide support for WLA members prior to, during, and after a challenge. It maintains a web page with many helpful links.